

REMARKS

STATUS OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1 and 3-10 are currently pending in this application. Claims 1 and 5-9 are rejected. The Examiner indicated that claims 2-4 are objected to, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 2 is hereby cancelled. New claim 10 is added via this Amendment.

Priority:

The Examiner questions whether the certified copy of the French priority application has been received. Applicants respectfully direct the Examiner's attention to the "Notification of Missing Requirements" mailed May 20, 2002, wherein the USPTO acknowledged receipt of the priority document from the International Bureau. If a copy is still needed, please let Applicants know and the Applicants would be happy to provide a courtesy copy.

PRELIMINARY MATTER:

The claims are hereby amended for clarification of language and to more closely resemble U.S. claim format. These changes were not made for reasons pertaining to patentability.

Claims 1, 6, 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Mehnert (U.S. Patent No. 3,579,621).

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mehnert taken together with Kikuchi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,738,612 [hereinafter "Kikuchi"]).

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mehnert taken together with Bailey et al. (U.S. Patent No. 2,674,006 [hereinafter "Bailey"]).

The Examiner indicated that claims 2-4 would be allowable if written in independent form to include the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. The features of allowable claim 2 are hereby included into claim 1 so as to place the case in condition for allowance and render the rejections moot.

New claim 10 is added to obtain more varied protection for the invention. Claim 10 is dependent upon claim 1 and is thus allowable at least by virtue of its dependency.

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue that the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, he is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number listed below.

A Petition for Extension of Time with appropriate fee accompanies this document. The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all additional required fees (except the Issue/Pub-

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.111
U.S. SERIAL NO. 10/088,231

ART UNIT 1722
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lication Fees) to our Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said
Deposit Account.

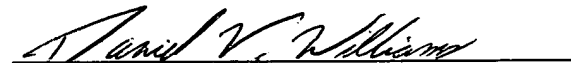
Respectfully submitted,

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Date: June 30, 2004